



## STEERING COMMITTEE OPEN SPACE, PARKS & RECREATION FOLLOW UP

City of Alexandria | Department of Planning and Zoning  
May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

PURPOSE: At the 11<sup>th</sup> Eisenhower West Steering Committee meeting, several follow up deliverables were requested. Below is a compilation of those deliverables regarding open space, parks, and recreation.

- 1 What Was Covered in the April 27<sup>th</sup> Presentation
  - Open Space Goals for Eisenhower West
    - Goal 4: Eisenhower West will have safe, efficient, and linked pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular mobility thereby providing better access citywide to the future amenities of the area.
    - Goal 6: Eisenhower West will have a connected, accessible, and identifiable park and open space system that serves the citywide recreational needs.
  - Open Space Principles
    - Create and open space network in new development areas.
    - Protect, expand, and connect stream valleys and other environmentally-sensitive area.
    - Link and expand pedestrian, bicycle, and trail system.
    - Protect and enrich existing parks.
    - Provide additional recreational opportunities.
    - Enhance streetscape and gateways.
  - Major Character-Defining Open Space Elements
    - Restored Backlick Run
    - Civic Space at Van Dorn Metro
    - Bush Hill Park
    - Multi-Purpose Trails/Trail Connections
    - Green Streets
    - Enhanced Gateways
    - Tree Canopy
    - Community Facilities (School, Recreational Facilities)
  - Implementation/Maintenance Strategies
    - Identify priority public open spaces
    - Create privately-owned public space, with public access easements (i.e., Eisenhower East open space, Rivergate, approved Beauregard open space)
    - Rooftop open space
    - Shared funding/developer contributions
    - Public-Private Partnerships
    - Business Improvement Districts
    - Zoning

## 2 Relevant Policies and Documents

- [Citywide Open Space Plan](#)
- [RPCA Strategic Plan](#)
- [Brenman and Boothe Park Plan](#)
- [Henley Park Plans](#)
- [Eco-City Charter](#)
- [Play Space Policy](#)
- [Urban Forestry Master Plan](#)
- [Comprehensive Athletic Fields Master Plan](#)

## 3 Follow Up Items

- Current acreage of parks/open space in Eisenhower West area:  
The plan area currently includes 91.2 acres of public open space, including two Citywide Parks (Brenman/Boothe and Hensley Parks), one linear park (Cameron Station Linear Park), and one small natural area (Clermont Natural Park). The City's Open Space Master Plan and Park and Recreation Strategic Master Plan, adopted in 2003, set forth a goal to maintain a ratio of 7.3 acres of public open space for every 1,000 residents. At the end of 2014, the City was still meeting that goal through the acquisition of land for open space, open space received through private development, and other conservation and public access easements. The goal is based on citywide acreage, not by small area plan boundaries, however, as a reference point only, the Eisenhower West plan area currently has approximately 4,900 residents, and therefore the current acreage exceeds 7.3 acres/1,000 residents (35.7 acres) within its boundaries. The Eisenhower West planning area includes three sites/areas identified as priority open space in the Open Space Master Plan – enhancement/protection of Backlick Run (multiple property owners), creation of a civic space at and adjacent to the Metro station, and the property known as Clermont Cove (adjacent to the City owned Clermont Natural Park and owned by Norfolk Southern).
- Proposed acreage of parks/open space in Eisenhower West area:  
The open space ratio goal is helpful in determining how much additional open space (beyond the current citywide total) the City would need to maintain 7.3 acres/1,000 residents. For instance, with every additional 10,000 residents, another 73 acres of public open space is necessary. Keep in mind that this is a citywide metric and not measured at the SAP level. When we articulate open space needs for the planning area, we must look at the expected amount of residential development as a guide. Staff and the consultant team are evaluating and estimating the currently proposed open space acreage for the plan area, but it is unlikely it will meet the aforementioned goal. Currently, the plaza at Metro, the parcel adjacent to Bush Hill, Clermont Cove, and a restored Backlick Run as shown in the draft concept plan amounts to less than 32 acres.

- Acreage of open space in adjacent SAPs:

Small Area Plan	Size of SAP (acres)	Existing Open Space (acres)	Additional Planned Open Space (acres)
Beauregard	456	123 (includes Winkler Preserve 44 acres)	48
Landmark/ Van Dorn SAP (including EW)	1,227	125	
Braddock	238	11.5	2 (approx.)
Waterfront	361	2.3 (core only)	5.5 (core only)
Seminary Hill/ Strawberry Hill	1,888	183	
Eisenhower West	620	91	TBD

- Bush Hill/historic resources park protections and funding programs:  
The Office of Historic Alexandria may have additional information on funding resources for the protection of this historic resource. One option is for preservation/conservation easements and the associated tax benefits.
- Goals from prior approved plans:  
Since approval of the Open Space Master Plan in 2003, the City completed the Eisenhower East, Arlandria, Potomac Yard, Landmark/Van Dorn, Braddock Metro and Braddock East, Beauregard Corridor, and the Waterfront Plans. Each of these plans includes a significant public open space component, with a focus on connectivity and trails, neighborhood serving parks, and implementation of the Open Space Master Plan's Green Crescent (attached).

In Goal 2 of the Open Space Master Plan, one of the recommendations is to utilize selection criteria for identifying privately owned land suitable for parkland/open space use, including if it's "near or adjacent to natural resource areas" and "known of potential historic or cultural significance." There are some state grants (funding approved annually and not always available) like the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, which is a matching grant program for land acquisition (includes historic properties) and the Certified Local Government Grants, which is a partnership between local governments and the federal historic preservation program.

Page 90 of the Open Space Master Plan is particularly relevant regarding using balanced development principles to achieve the plan's goals:  
*Within the City of Alexandria, the balanced development approach might be most applicable in areas such as Eisenhower Valley, where substantial new development is likely to occur and where preservation of open space as part of the development planning process will help preserve and enhance the city's "last remaining open space frontier." Balanced development can be loosely defined as financing the preservation of open space by developing only a portion of the property in question.*

- Park typologies:

In order to systematically approach planning of all the City's existing parks, RPCA staff developed a park typology system (below). Planning for Citywide Parks was completed last year, and drafts of the Neighborhood Parks plans are available for comment now. The Eisenhower West planning area contains two Citywide Parks, one linear park, and one natural area. There are no neighborhood parks, pocket parks, shared use, or destination/historical parks within the area.

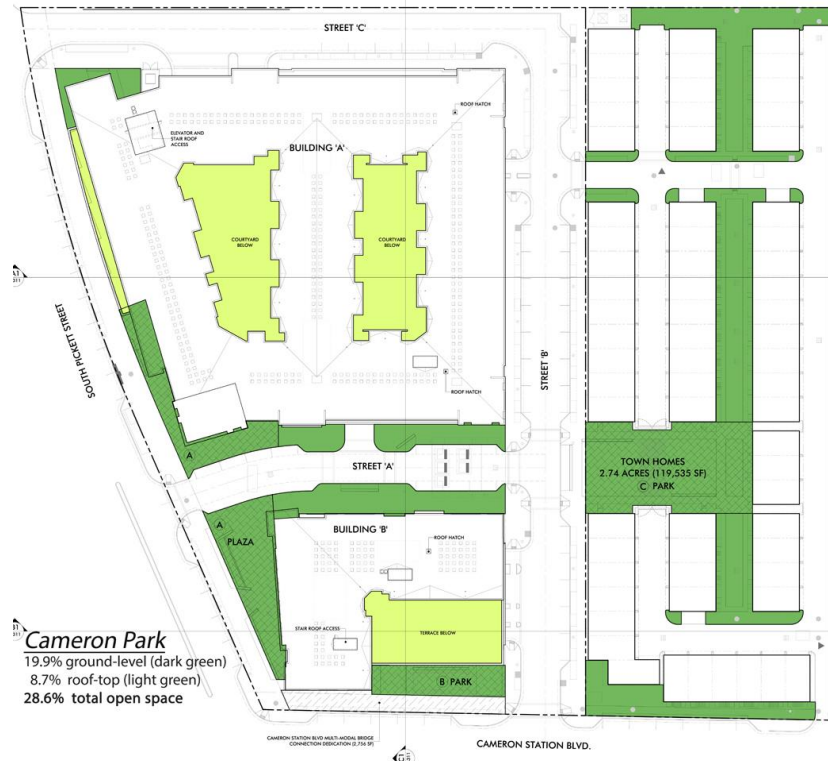
**City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities**  
**Park Typologies**

Classification	Description	Size	Service	Estimated Planning Process Timeline
Citywide	Contains multiple uses within park boundary including; attracts visitors from all over the City Example: Chinguapin Park	10 to 50 acres	0-25 miles from users	2013 – 2014
Neighborhood	May include multiple uses within park boundary; attracts nearby residents Example: Beverley Park.	0.5 acres to 10 acres	0-5 miles from users	2014 – 2015
Pocket Park	Small open space; mainly single use attracting nearby residents Example: Sunset Mini Park	Under 0.5 acres	.25-0.5 mile or less from users	2015
Natural Resource Areas	Includes open spaces that are primarily passive-use or preservation areas. Example: Clermont Natural Park	No Minimum or Maximum	Citywide	2015 – 2016
Shared Use	Includes parks that share facilities with schools and recreation centers Examples: Patrick Henry Field	5-20 acres (average)	0-25 miles from users	Included as part of the 2013-2014 Long-Range Educational Facilities Plan
Destination/ Historical	Attracts users from beyond the region, typically because of a particularly unique features. Example: Ft. Ward Park, Waterfront Park System	Varies	0-100 or more miles.	Park Plans completed individually for these sites because of their unique character.
Regional	Includes lands or facilities administered by other regional entities Example: Cameron Run Regional Park	50-75 acres	0-100 miles from users	Planned by external jurisdictions.
Corridors/Linear Parks/Trailways	Includes trailways, corridors and linear parks that serve primarily as linear bikeway corridors; may include ROWs. Example: Metro Linear Park	No Minimum or Maximum	0-100 miles from users	Included as part of the upcoming Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan

- Local examples of 20-40% open space on-site:  
Staff had recommended 30% open space for residential properties and that of this 30%, 10% would be provided on-site and 20% in shared open space for the neighborhood, similar to Eisenhower East. Please note that when requiring on-site open space it is evident that it is less useable open space (e.g., private sidewalks are included as open space), and that very little of that open space counts toward the City's public open space goals, since much of it is private. As a result, the open space is of a different quality than if it is coordinated into a larger amenity such as a pocket park or active trail.

Cameron Park: 28.6% Total Open Space

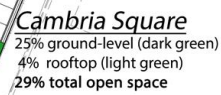
- 19.9% Ground Level (Dark Green)
- 8.7% Rooftop (Light Green)



- 24% Ground Level (Dark Green)
- 5% Above Grade (Light Green)



- 25% Ground Level (Dark Green)
- 4% Roof Top (Light Green)

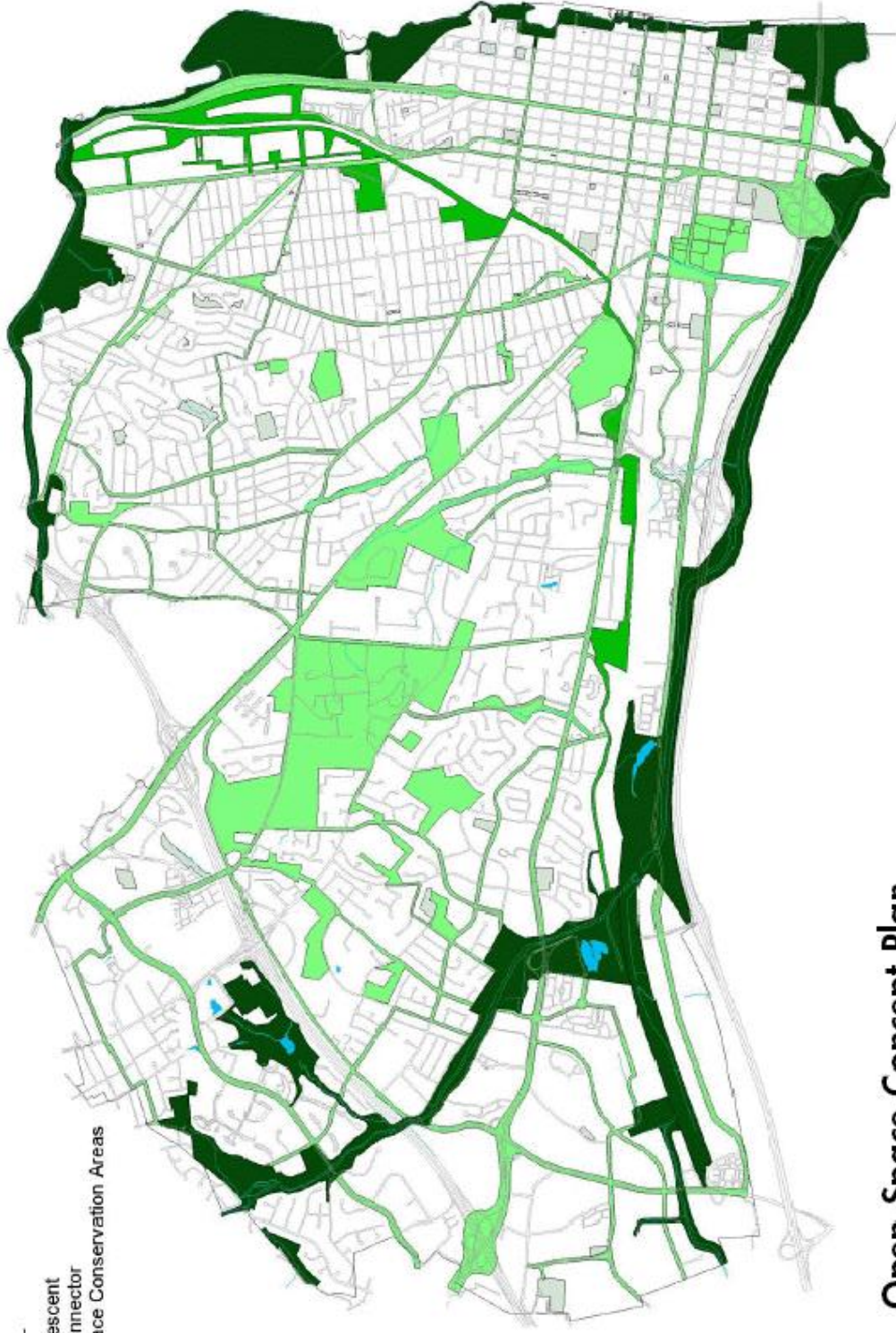


<b>APPROVED</b>	
SPECIAL USE PERMIT NO. <u>2014-00004</u>	
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING	
DIRECTOR _____	DATE _____
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
SITE PLAN NO. _____	
DIRECTOR _____	DATE _____



Legend

- Green Crescent
- Green Connector
- Open Space Conservation Areas
- Parks



Open Space Concept Plan

## **2004 Open Space Steering Committee Report and Recommendations for Implementation of the Open Space Master Plan**

*The Open Space Plan proposed to trace a broad, green line around the City, drawing on the two channelized "runs" that defined the boundary of Alexandria at the north and the south, joined by pieces of trails and possible linkages to the Potomac waterfront on the east. The protection of our stream valleys, the natural resources they contain, and the connections they provide are the highest priority in this plan. This Green Crescent, a zone of hope and possibilities, strung with pieces of trails and gems of parks, is now the backbone of a plan to connect our City and its neighborhoods. (2004 Open Space Steering Committee Report).*

**Goal 2 of the Open Space Plan recommends using the following selection criteria for identifying privately-owned land suitable for acquisition or other protection by the City for parkland/open space use:**

1. Privately owned land near or adjacent to existing parks and trails
2. Near or adjacent to existing schools
3. Near or adjacent to natural resource areas
4. At street endings to provide neighborhood linkages
5. Next to institutional properties with extensive open space, valuable natural resources, and/or potential public access
6. Adjacent to or linking existing or proposed trails or greenways
7. Small lots in dense urban neighborhoods for pocket parks, gardens, green spaces, and playgrounds
8. Lands with significant trees, sloping-terrain, and other natural resource features
9. Properties with known or potential historic or cultural significance
10. Lands in areas identified in the Needs Assessment as those with a high need for open space
11. Excess rights-of-way
12. Open space and trail connections adjacent to or linking open spaces, natural areas, greenways and trails in Arlington, or Fairfax Counties

### **Additional Recommendations from the 2004 Open Space Steering Committee Report:**

1. Acquire Clermont Cove Property at 201 Clermont Avenue, 15 acres of heavily wooded natural area with several RPA's
2. Develop a pedestrian trail along the back of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Cameron Run Regional Park and the City Animal Shelter, NVRP A and City property
3. Include a trail in the future as part of a natural stream reclamation of Backlick Run west from Booth Park to the City line
4. Complete trail loop on the south side of Backlick Run in Ben Brenman Park